Chapter 7 THE DISTRIBUTION OF ASYLUM SEEKERS OVER NORTHERN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES[64]

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I estimated socio-economic determinants of specific migration types in the post-industrial era. Asylum migration has also been an important migration type in this era. I will discuss this migration type separately in this chapter, as the analyses on asylum migration will be considerably different: the dependent variable will be the distribution of asylum seekers over countries instead of the volume of asylum migration. Moreover, I will abandon the case study approach, as asylum data are available for most Western European countries.

In the 1980s increasing numbers of asylum seekers sought refuge in mainly Northern and Western Europe. Similar to other types of migration, asylum migration may exert a considerable impact on social and political life in receiving countries. Asylum migration is often more multifaceted than classical migration types such as colonial, labour, family and retirement migration. In general asylum flows contain a larger diversity of nationalities and age groups and a more proportional representation of males and females. In this chapter I try to identify determinants of this multifarious migration type in potential receiving countries in Europe. A distinction has been made between social, institutional (including legal) and economic determinants. The volume of asylum migration is, at least for a considerable part, determined by factors in the region of origin –a sincere asylum migrant has only push motives underlying his decision to migrate. Nevertheless, the choice of a certain country of destination can undoubtedly partly be determined by factors in potential receiving countries. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to estimate determinants of the distribution of asylum seekers in Europe. The research has been limited to Northern and Western European countries. Altogether, 12 Northern and Western European countries have been included in the study[65]. Eastern European countries have not been included in the analysis as many asylum seekers who apply for asylum in these countries are actually aiming to travel to Western Europe and do so when they get the opportunity (Van Dam and Van der Erf, 1998). Southern European countries have not been taken into account, as potential asylum migrants prefer clandestine

[64] An earlier version of this chapter has been presented at the World Congress of Sociology, Brisbane (Australia), July 2002 (Jennissen and Van Wissen, 2002).

[65] All Western and Northern European countries with a population of more than one million have been taken into account.

sojourn rather than the regular asylum procedure. The decision to apply for asylum in one of the northern or western countries, or to seek clandestine refuge in one of the southern countries is real and an interesting one. Unfortunately, I have no information (except the information about the regularisation programmes, see table 5.5) about undocumented migration to southern countries.

7.2 Outline

In order to provide a background of the phenomenon of asylum migration in Europe, section 7.3 describes the course of a displaced person who chooses to become an asylum migrant in Europe. In section 7.3.1 causes of refugee movements will be given. Furthermore, this section shows that asylum and economic migration are sometimes hard to distinguish. Sections 7.3.2 and 7.3.3 describe the main areas of origin and destination of international refugees in the period 1960-2000. Section 7.3.4 focuses on asylum applications in Northern and Western Europe in the period 1985-1999. Moreover, factors which influence the distribution of asylum seekers over the Northern and Western Europe countries will be described on the basis of actual asylum flows. I will briefly reflect on the proportion of approved asylum applications in Northern and Western Europe in section 7.3.5. Section 7.4 is the analytical part of this chapter. This section contains a description of the factors determining the choice of a country of asylum (section 7.4.1) and the data used (section 7.4.2). Analyses will be conducted on the distribution of the total number of asylum applications (section 7.4.3), of Turkish asylum applications (section 7.4.4) and of asylum applications from (the former) Yugoslavia (section 7.4.5). Finally, section 7.5 provides some conclusions and a discussion.

7.3 Background: becoming an asylum migrant in Europe[66]

The course of a displaced person who becomes an asylum migrant in Europe is rather long. This course, in which a potential asylum migrant (or trafficker) has to make a number of choices[67] and finally undergoes a screening by the authorities in the receiving country, is illustrated in *Figure 7.1*. The first choice is whether to leave home and become a displaced person or not. Once on the move, the question is where to seek refuge. The framework depicts this problem as a set of subsequent choices, where each ensuing choice leads to a more distant destination: resettlement in one's own country, in neighbouring countries or overseas. Europe is one of the overseas destinations, except for refugees from the former Yugoslavia, which has

[66] This section is based on an article in Dutch, published in *Vrede en Veiligheid: Tijdschrift voor Internationale Vraagstukken* (Jennissen and Van Wissen, 2003).

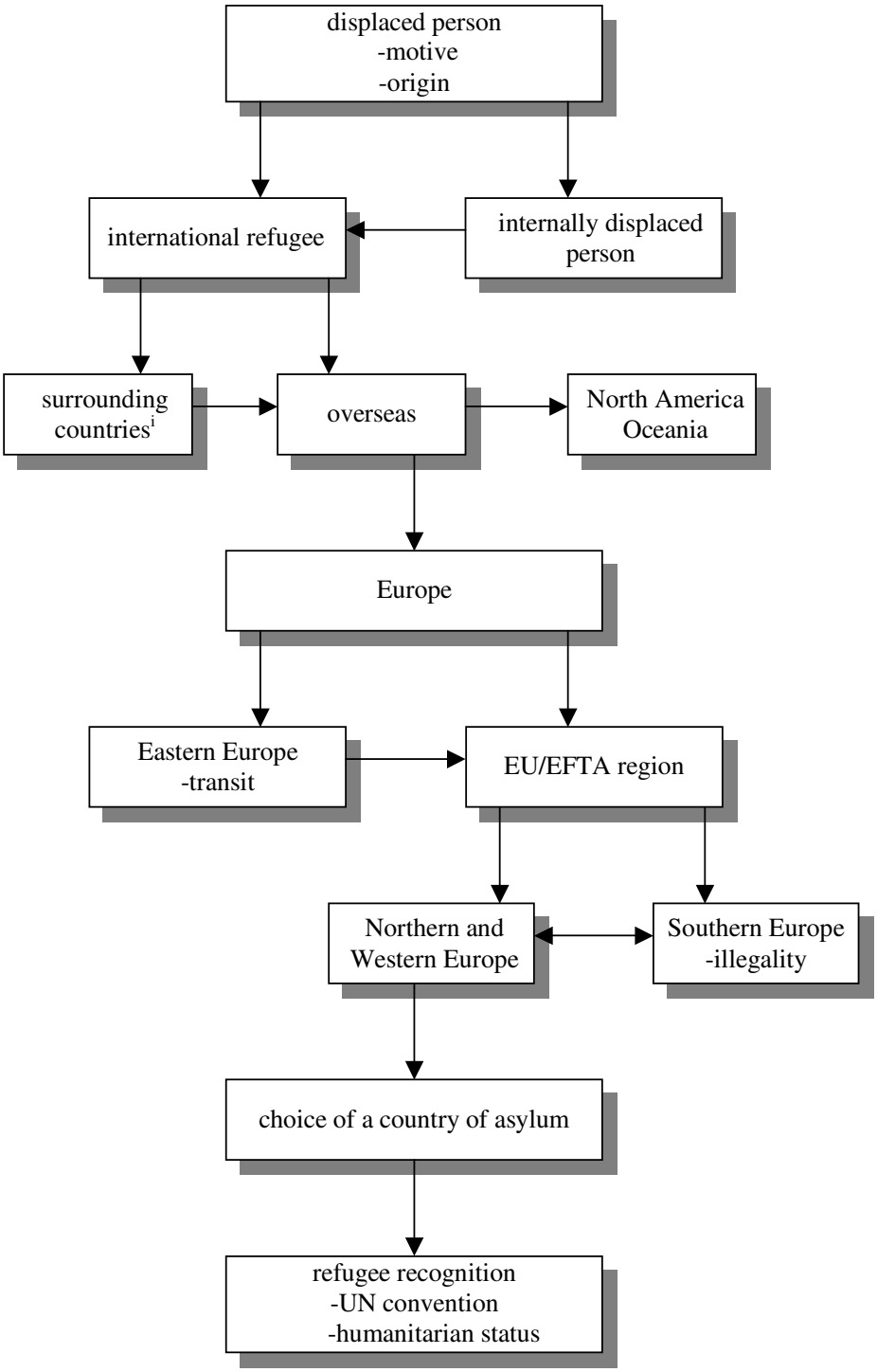
[67] The question that arises is whether we may speak about a choice here. Often displaced persons have no or a limited choice because of limited (financial) means or other restrictive circumstances.

the European Union as its neighbour. In the following sections the various steps will be described in more detail. The terms refugee and asylum seeker/applicant are difficult to distinguish and they are used interchangeably in these sections. The term refugee is used for both internationally displaced people in a country which lacks a regulated asylum procedure and for asylum seekers who have obtained a status. For instance, a native of Kosovo who has fled to a refugee camp in the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia is called a refugee. If this same person decides to continue his journey to a country in Western Europe and he submits an asylum application there, he is called an asylum seeker. If this Kosovo asylum seeker succeeds in obtaining a refugee status, he is called a refugee. Asylum seekers who have obtained a status can be divided into those who are recognised under the UN Convention and those who are recognised on the basis of humanitarian reasons. Article 1 of the 1951 UN Convention of refugees defines a refugee as

> as a person who is outside his/her country of nationality or habitual residence; has a well-founded fear of persecution because of his/her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion; and is unable or unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country, or to return, for fear of persecution.

Initially, the 1951 UN Convention for refugees only referred to Europeans. The Convention was extended with a UN protocol that included any person worldwide in 1967. By the end of 2002 139 states had become signatories to the 1967 protocol (UNHCR, 2003). The interpretation of the aforementioned definition may vary between countries. Therefore, it is possible that a particular asylum seeker receives a Convention status in a country in spite of rejection in another country (Van der Erf, 2001).

Figure 7.1. The course taken by a displaced person to become an asylum migrant in Northern or Western Europe



i Surrounding countries may also be situated in Europe (e.g. for refugees from the former Yugoslavia).

7.3.1 Causes of refugee movements

People have different reasons to flee from their country of residence. Zolberg *et al*. (1989) distinguish three categories of refugees: the refugee as an activist, as a target and as a victim. Refugees who are activists have been involved in some political action against the authorities of their country of residence. Examples are the Chilean refugees in Sweden, the seat of the Chilean parliament in exile during the Pinochet dictatorship, and dissidents that fled China. Refugees who are targets are members of a social or cultural group on whom violence is perpetrated by the state or other social or cultural groups. Examples are the Kurdish refugees (not the politically active ones) from Northern Iraq, and the Tutsis, who were subjected to genocide, in Rwanda and Burundi in 1994. Refugees who are victims are exposed to societal or international-level violence in their country of residence. However, this violence is not directed at them as individuals. Examples are refugees who flee to escape from armed conflicts between the federal army and guerrillas in countries like Angola and Colombia. It is difficult to make a strict distinction between the three aforementioned categories of refugees. For instance, people who stand up for the rights of a social or cultural minority are often also members of this social or cultural minority.

It may be difficult to disentangle migration motivated by material gain and migration motivated by fear of violence as countries with political chaos and violence are often countries with a low GDP per capita, high unemployment and a low level of social security (United Nations, 1997). Moreover, a policy to undermine the economic position of a cultural or social minority may be part of a general policy to discriminate or persecute a particular cultural or social section of the population (Zolberg *et al*., 1989).

Nation states play an important role in the creation of refugee flows. Even if violence between different social or cultural groups is the cause of a refugee flow, the nation state still plays a role by being absent or ineffective. States may implode due to lack of resources (Keely, 1996). Therefore, state implosion may also occur when external support for weak states has been withdrawn. Mostly former colonial masters or in a recent past the United States or the Soviet Union, induced by the Cold War, were the providers of economic, political or military support to weak states in the Third World. Features of state implosion are: no government and juridical system, an impoverished infrastructure, a lack of basic social services, a primitive economy, which is only focused on the internal market, and a monetary system that has become worthless. In addition to withdrawal of external support Keely, also distinguishes misgovernment, corruption, natural disasters and changes in market forces as potential causes of state implosion. Examples of imploded states are: Afghanistan (withdrawal of support due to the end of the Cold War), Somalia (withdrawal of Italian and British colonial support and the end of the Cold War), Congo-Zaire (withdrawal of Belgian colonial support and misgovernment/corruption during Mobutu's dictatorship (Thomson, 2000)) and

Colombia (persons involved in drug production and trafficking corrupt local and national authorities and disorder the economy with large amounts of illegally obtained money).

7.3.2 Main areas of origin

The total number of international refugees in the world has risen from less than 2 million in the beginning of the 1960s to about 13 million in 2000. Furthermore, there were between 20 and 25 million internally displaced persons at the beginning of 2000. The internally displaced are those who flee their homes, but stay in their own country. Therefore, they are not protected by international law and often not eligible for many types of aid (United Nations, 1998a; UNHCR, 2000b).

Only small numbers of refugees fled European countries since the aftermath of the Second World War until the second half of the 1980s. The only European refugees in this era were political dissidents from the communist countries in Central and Eastern Europe, who succeeded in slipping past the barrier of the Iron Curtain. In addition, political opponents of the dictatorially governed countries in Southern Europe (Greece, Portugal and Spain) fled to Northern and Western Europe until the first years of the 1970s. Especially young Portuguese fled their home country to escape from military service and consequently from the anti-colonial guerrilla wars in Portuguese Africa. In the second half of the 1980s less restrictive emigration policies caused increasing asylum migration from communist countries. The period 1989-92 was very turbulent. The war in the former Yugoslavia and the unstable situation in the former Soviet Union caused large flows of European asylum seekers that continued for the duration of the entire decade.

In the 1960s the largest group of international refugees in Asia were the Palestinians. Many Palestinians fled to Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Furthermore, there were large refugee flows out of Vietnam and from China to Hong Kong (Beyer, 1981). The number of refugees in Asia increased sharply in the 1970s. Millions of Bengal Hindus fled from the civil war in East Pakistan in 1971. Most of these refugees returned to the by then independent Bangladesh after the December 1971 war between Pakistan and India (Sisson and Rose, 1990). Other large refugee groups were the boat people from Vietnam, Kampucheans and Afghans. The outflow of Afghans to neighbouring countries continued during the 1980s, and in 1990 the Afghan refugee population in Iran and Pakistan had amounted to more than 6 million (UNHCR, 2000a). Moreover, armed conflicts in Sri Lanka and Lebanon and the war between Iran and Iraq resulted in large flows of refugees in the 1980s. The numbers of refugees from Afghanistan decreased but remained at a very high level in the 1990s. In this decade Iraq, Iran, Kurdistan (mainly the Iraqi and Turkish part), the Caucasus and Central Asia were important Asian origin areas of (international) refugees.

The struggle for independence by African states caused large flows of refugees in the 1960s and 1970s (Beyer, 1981; Zolberg *et al*., 1989). Many refugees fled, for instance, from Algeria and the Belgian Congo in the first half of the 1960s. The struggle for independence in Portuguese Africa produced a large flow of refugees from the beginning of the 1960s until the actual independence in 1975. After independence political and social unrest which was repressed during the colonial period came to the surface. Examples of this unrest that led to violent conflicts are: the Nigerian civil war, the Eritrean independence movement, the religious conflict in the south of the Sudan and racial conflicts in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda (Aiboni, 1978 in Beyer, 1981). Ongoing civil wars caused large refugee flows from Ethiopia, the Sudan, Chad, Angola, Mozambique and Namibia in the 1980s (Zolberg *et al*., 1989). The states of Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Zaire collapsed in the 1990s (Thomson, 2000). Together with ongoing conflicts these state implosions brought about large refugee flows in the 1990s.

In the period 1960-1999 the bulk of international refugees from Latin American originated from three specific areas: the Caribbean, Central America and the Southern Cone. The biggest refugee flows from the Caribbean consisted of Cubans and Haitians. In the 1960s and 1970s about 650,000 Cubans fled from the Castro regime. This outflow continued in the 1980s and 1990s. A peak year was 1980 when thousands of Cubans entered the Peruvian Embassy seeking asylum. Thousands of Haitians fled from the tyranny of the Duvaliers until 1986. Armed conflicts between leftist and rightist movements broke out in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala in the 1970s and 1980s. These prompted massive flows of refugees departing from these Central American countries. Military coups were staged in the Southern Cone (Chile, Uruguay and Argentina) between 1973 and 1976. Many political opponents of these military regimes fled from these countries until the reinstatement of democracy, albeit weak, in the 1980s (Beyer, 1981; Zolberg *et al*., 1989).

7.3.3 Global distribution

By far most refugees that flee from their own country seek protection in the surrounding countries. Only a relatively small proportion seeks asylum in other parts of the world (Europe, North America or Oceania). Between 1991 and 1995, for instance, 750,000 Liberians sought refuge in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea, while only about 20,000 Liberians submitted an asylum application in Western Europe in this period (UNHCR, 1997). Another example of a large refugee population which mainly sought refuge in the neighbouring countries are the Afghan refugees. By far most Afghan refugees sought refuge in Iran and Pakistan. Yugoslavian and Caucasian refugees mainly sought asylum in Europe. Europe received refugees from its own backyard as well as from other parts of the world. North America and Oceania only received refugees from other continents. However, we may observe a regional component in the refugee flows to these two continents as well; many Central American and Caribbean refugees

sought asylum in North America, whereas a relatively large number of refugees from South-east Asia sought asylum in Oceania. African and Asia countries almost solely received refugees from their own neighbours on the same continent.

The distribution of the world's refugees between the continents is subject to change. The distribution in 1980, 1989, 1995 and 2000 is reflected in *Table 7.1*.

Table 7.1. Distribution of international refugees by continent of asylum (percentages)

	end 1980	end 1989	end 1995	end 2000
Africa	44.6	30.9	43.0	30.0
Asia	27.7	45.6	33.8	44.6
Europe	7.2	5.4	15.9	19.3
Latin America	2.4	8.1	1.0	0.3
North America	14.5	9.4	6.0	5.2
Oceania	3.6	0.7	0.3	0.6
Total (millions)	8.2	14.9	13.2	12.0

Sources: UNHCR (2001) and UNHCR in United Nations (1997, p. 16).

The millions of Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan are the main reason of the relatively large proportion of refugees in Asia. Moreover, Iran was a place of refuge for many Iraqi Kurds and Shiites. The main causes of the relatively large proportion of refugees in Europe in 1995 are the war in the former Yugoslavia, the unstable situation in the former Soviet Union, but also improved transport facilities (i.e. cheap and frequent flight connections). The large proportion of refugees in Oceania in the beginning of the 1980s may be explained by the large number of Vietnamese boat people, who sought asylum there. Armed conflicts in Central America and many Haitians that mainly fled to the Dominican Republic were the main causes of the relatively large refugee population in Latin America in 1990. Table 6.1 shows that the number of refugees that sought asylum in North America in the first half of the 1990s decreased. This may be explained by the increased political stability in Central America. Furthermore, stricter immigration policies in the United States played a role (McBride, 1999). The last observation (2000) shows an unmistakable shift in the distribution from Africa to Asia. The number of refugees in Africa decreased as a result of the relative stability in the Great Lakes region. Rising numbers of Afghan refugees in Pakistan caused an increase in Asia. Escalations of ethnic violence in Kosovo and Macedonia (FYROM) resulted in a larger proportion of the international refugee population within Europe.

Europe can be divided into three parts with respect to asylum migration: (1) Northern and Western Europe, (2) Southern Europe (Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain) and (3) Eastern Europe (the former communist countries). The countries in Northern and Western Europe were the main destination countries of asylum seekers. However, the number of refugees in

Southern Europe is often underestimated, as potential asylum migrants in these countries often prefer to engage in clandestine sojourn rather than the regular asylum procedure. The extensive hidden economy in Southern Europe provides fair job opportunities for clandestines. Southern European governments regularly confer legal status to clandestines, who have resided in the country for a long time (see table 5.5). Asylum seekers whose application for asylum has been rejected in Northern or Western Europe may prefer illegal sojourn in Southern Europe as opposed to illegal sojourn in Northern and Western Europe, or to return to their country of origin. Conversely, Southern Europe often has a transit function for asylum migration to Western Europe. Refugees seeking asylum in Eastern Europe were almost unheard of from the aftermath of the Second World War until the downfall of the communist system in 1989. After 1989 asylum seekers discovered the former communist countries as a potential destination. However, asylum migration to Eastern Europe nowhere near reached the level of Northern and Western Europe. In addition, as already mentioned in section 7.1, many asylum seekers who submit an asylum application in Eastern European countries are actually aiming to travel to Western Europe and they will do so when they get the opportunity. Exceptions are some large refugee flows, especially between the successor states of the former Yugoslavia (from Bosnia-Herzegovina to Croatia and Serbia-Montenegro; from Croatia to Serbia-Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina; and from the Serbian province of Kosovo to Albania and Macedonia (FYROM)) and the Soviet Union (from Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics to each other and to the Russian Federation).

7.3.4 Asylum seekers in Northern and Western Europe

Most asylum seekers that sought refuge in Europe in the first half of the 1980s originated from Asia, followed by (Eastern) Europe and Africa. Asylum migration from Asia peaked in the middle of the 1980s. Armed conflicts in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Lebanon and the war between Iran and Iraq caused a large flow of refugees. In addition, many Indians, Pakistani and Vietnamese applied for asylum in Europe. European inflow of asylum seekers peaked in 1981 (almost 50,000 applications). In that year Austria received 34,500 mainly Polish asylum seekers (Te Brake, 1993). The distribution of asylum seekers over the European countries was rather disproportionate. In Europe West Germany had by far the biggest inflow of asylum seekers in the 1980s (Eurostat, 1997). Sweden, France and Austria also received a considerable proportion of the asylum seekers who sought refuge in Europe in the 1980s. Sweden, Switzerland, Germany and Austria were the leading countries in terms of number of asylum applications per head of the total population (UNHCR, 1998). All the aforementioned countries are among the most prosperous countries in Europe. This may be an indication that economic factors (i.e. GDP per capita or opportunities on the labour market) have a positive effect on the number of asylum applications. Next to economic factors asylum policies (legislation) may determine the choice of a particular country of asylum. Compared to other

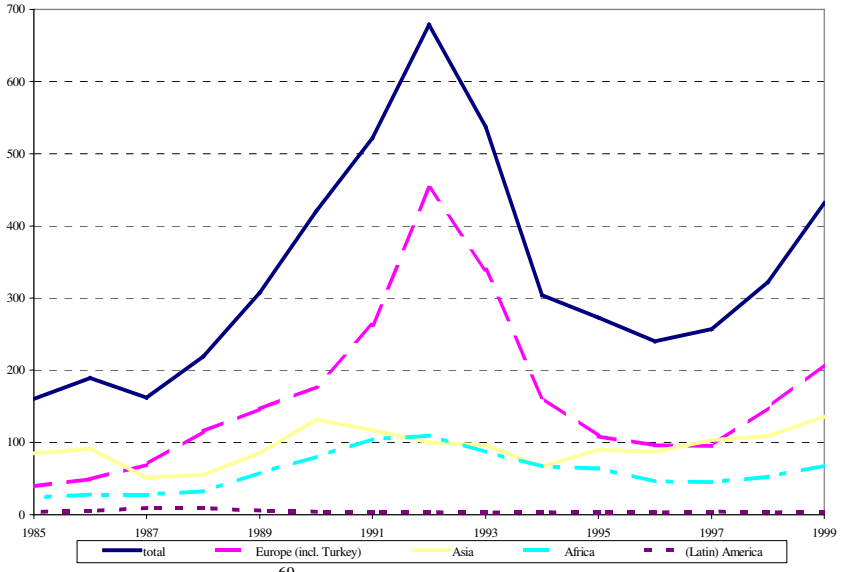
countries West Germany had a lenient asylum legislation (Fijalkovski, 1993; Kurthen, 1995; Wendt, 1997). The stocks of already present migrants also play a significant role in the distribution of asylum seekers. These stocks, in which migrants networks may be formed, are not necessarily the result of earlier asylum flows. They can also be caused by former labour or (post)colonial migration flows. An example of a migrant stock arising from labour migration which served as a network for asylum migrants is the Turkish community in Germany. Political turmoil in Turkey, ending with a military coup d'état in 1980, caused a large flow of asylum seekers and family migration from Turkey to Germany in the late 1970s and 1980 (Muus and Van Dam, 1998). Havinga and Böcker (1999) state that the colonial past accounts for the relatively high number of Africans in France, the UK, Portugal and Belgium, the relatively high number of Asians in France and the relatively high number of Latin Americans in Spain. A considerable proportion of the asylum seekers does not consciously choose a particular country of asylum. Often a trafficker or the presence of a mainport (i.e. an intercontinental airport) determines the "choice" of a particular country.

In the second half of the 1980s less restrictive emigration policies caused increasing (asylum) emigration from European communist countries. As a result asylum migration in Western Europe was given an additional dimension. Originally, asylum migration mainly involved south-to-north migration, but by the late 1980s asylum migration also included east-to-west migration. West German immigration figures substantially increased in the second half of the 1980s. This rising number of immigrants was due to an increasing inflow of asylum seekers and *Aussiedler* from Central and Eastern Europe. By the end of the 1980s communism collapsed in Eastern Europe. As mentioned in section 7.3.2 the period 1989-92 was very turbulent. The war in the former Yugoslavia and the unstable situation in the former Soviet Union caused a large inflow of European asylum seekers. Meanwhile, an ongoing flow of refugees from Asia and Africa sought asylum in Western Europe. In the period 1988-92 Germany still received the most asylum applications in Northern and Western Europe (51.8%) followed by France (10.6%) and Sweden (8.9%)[68]. Similar to the 1980s Sweden, Switzerland and Germany were the leading countries in Europe in this period in terms of asylum applications vis-à-vis national population.

After 1993 asylum applications in Northern and Western Europe did not reach the level of the previous period (see *Figure 7.2*). The main causes of this decrease were stricter asylum policies and the end of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina (Van Selm-Thornburn, 1998; OECD, 1998).

[68] Source: Eurostat (2001), own calculations.

Figure 7.2. Total number of asylum applications (thousands) in Northern and Western Europe by continent of origin



Source: Eurostat (2001).[69]

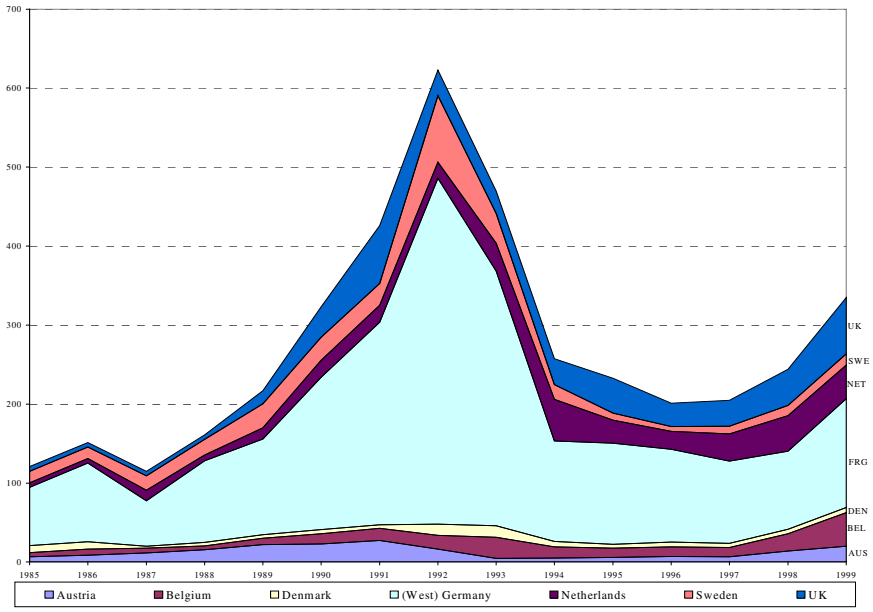
The number of asylum applications in a certain country is not only determined by the migration policy of the country itself, but also by the migration policy of the neighbouring countries. In the Netherlands, for instance, the number of new asylum requests rose from about 35,000 in 1993 to about 53,000 in 1994, while the total number of asylum requests in Europe declined (see *Figure 7.3*). The number of new requests in the Netherlands reached a peak in 1994. This peak was probably caused by stricter asylum policies in the neighbouring countries (especially in Germany) (United Nations, 1998a; Van Wissen and De Beer, 2000). Another possible explanation for this peak was the increasing inflow of Somali asylum seekers. In 1995 and 1996 the number of new requests decreased again to about the level of 1992. This decrease was caused by stricter conditions relating to application for asylum in 1994 and by the Dayton Peace Treaty (Nicolaas, 1997). Germany (54.1%), the UK (8.7%) and the Netherlands (8.5%) were the most important destination countries for asylum migrants in Northern and Western Europe in the period 1992-1999.

Figure 7.4 depicts the number of asylum applications per 1000 inhabitants in four selected Northern and Western European countries. The very large peak in Sweden in 1992 is remarkable. In that year Sweden received almost one asylum application per 100 inhabitants.

[69] No data for the Irish Republic 1985 and 1986. The data for the continents for Austria 1995 and 1997-99, Belgium 1985-87, 1994-95 and 1998, Denmark 1999, France 1999, Finland 1985-89 and 1999, Germany 1994-95 (and 1996 for Latin America), Norway 1994-98, Sweden 1995-96 and Switzerland 1993-96 have been estimated with the distribution of totals between the continents based on the (average) distribution of the proximate available year(s).

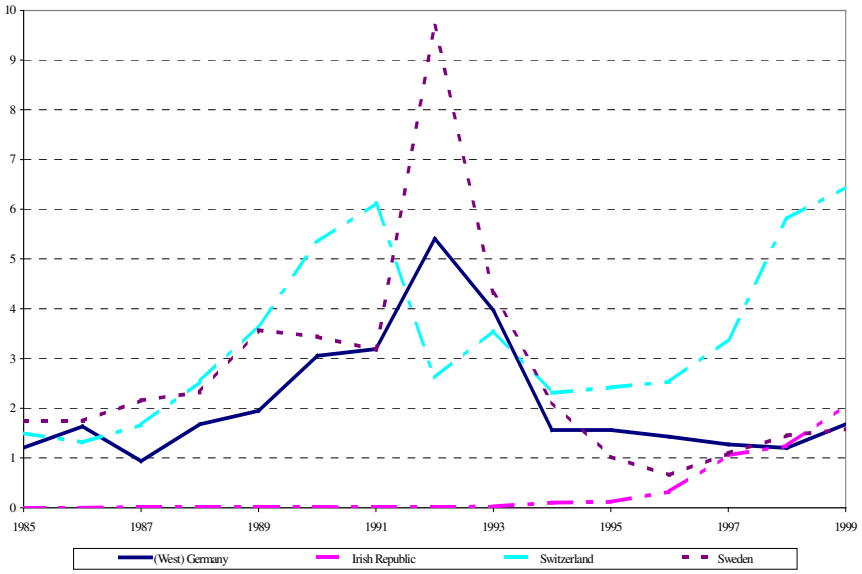
Asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia accounted for the major part (83%) of the asylum applications in 1992 (ICMPD, 1994). Furthermore, figure 7.4 shows that asylum seekers "discovered" the Irish Republic as a potential destination country in the second half of the 1990s. Strong economic growth is probably a significant reason why the Irish Republic has become a more important destination country for asylum seekers.

Figure 7.3. Asylum applications (thousands) in selected Northern and Western European countries, 1985-1999



Source: Eurostat (2001).

Figure 7.4. Asylum applications per 1000 inhabitants in selected Northern and Western European countries



Source: Eurostat (2001).

7.3.5 Refugee recognition in Northern and Western Europe

Thus far, I have only considered the number of asylum requests. In this section I will deal with the proportion of the asylum seekers that are actually granted refugee status. It is impossible to estimate the proportion of approved asylum applications with transversal computations (computations based on calendar years). Recognition rates which are based on transversal computations are not correct, as a lag exists between lodging an asylum application and the granting of refugee status. This lag varies between receiving countries and nationalities of asylum seekers and over time. In addition, transversal computations cause systematic underestimations of the real recognition rates as asylum seekers who lodge an appeal are often seen as new asylum applicants. More realistic recognition rates can be obtained with cohort-based asylum statistics (ICMPD, 1994; Torstensson *et al.*, 1998; Hovy, 2000; Doornbos and Groenendijk, 2001; Van der Erf, 2001).

The UK is the only country in Northern and Western Europe, for which cohort-based asylum statistics are available for a considerable number of years. Hovy (2000) calculated recognition rates for the 1988-1998 cohorts[70]. *Table 7.2* presents these rates.

[70] Prognoses are used to calculate the more recent recognition rates.

Table 7.2. Cohort-based recognition rates (percentages) of asylum applications in the UK[i]

Cohort	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
	71.0	64.5	66.7	59.5	45.5	47.2	21.4	16.8	20.9	22.2	17.0

Source: Hovy (2000).

i The recognition rates apply to both asylum applications recognised under the UN Convention and those who are recognised on the basis of humanitarian grounds. The latter is called a 'exceptional leave to remain status' in the UK.

Table 7.2 shows that the recognition rates for the cohorts that applied for asylum in the late 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s were considerably higher than for the cohorts after 1993. Doornbos and Groenendijk (2001) calculated recognition rates for the 1995-1997 cohorts in the Netherlands. The recognition rates in the Netherlands for the 1995, 1996 and 1997 cohorts were more than twice as high as in the UK. Van der Erf (2002) provided more recent recognition rates for the Netherlands. He estimated that the recognition rates decreased sharply from 32% in 1998 to 16% in 2002. Torstensson *et al.* (1998) calculated recognition rates for Turkish and Somali cohorts (1992 and 1993) in Sweden and Switzerland. These rates are shown in *Table 7.3*.

Table 7.3. Cohort-based recognition rates (percentages, cohorts 1992 and 1993) of Turkish and Somali asylum seekers in Sweden and Switzerland[i]

		Nationality	
		Turkish	Somali
Country of asylum	Sweden	43.5	83.4
	Switzerland	29.8	57.7

Source: Torstensson *et al.* (1998), calculations by the author.

i The recognition rates apply to both asylum applications recognised under the UN Convention and those who are recognised on the basis of humanitarian grounds. Asylum applications which are still under consideration have not been taken into account. Sweden has no complete information on departures of asylum seekers. Therefore, following Torstensson *et al.* (1998), I have regarded asylum applications in Sweden, with a preliminary negative decision but without a definitive decision at 31 December 1996, as definitive rejections.

Table 7.3 shows that recognition rates may be different in different countries. The cognition rates in Switzerland were considerably lower than those in Sweden. Furthermore, table 7.3 shows that recognition rates may be considerably different for different nationalities. The recognition rates for Somali asylum seekers were almost twice as high as for Turkish asylum seekers in both Sweden and Switzerland for the 1992 and 1993 cohorts. Cohort-based asylum statistics provide better insight into the share of asylum seekers who obtain a status. However, an international comparison of recognition rates which are computed with cohort-based asylum statistics is also not completely accurate. The fact that some countries include asylum requests that do not bear the pre-screening procedure and others do not, makes

international comparisons of the number of asylum applications and of the proportion of granted asylum requests difficult. Switzerland, for instance, does not include asylum requests that do not bear the 'pre-screening' or 'admission procedure' (Torstensson *et al*., 1998) and therefore the Swiss figures are biased upwards. Moreover, pre-screening procedures may differ in stringency between countries. Asylum seekers from 'safe countries' are often directly evicted. Other asylum seekers who are often excluded from the regular asylum procedure are asylum seekers who already submitted an asylum application in another EU country or had the chance to do so (Van der Erf, 2001). According to the Dublin treaty, only in countries of first arrival are asylum seekers allowed to make an asylum application. The fact that some countries only register the main applicant and ignore their children is another reason that complicates international comparisons of the proportion of granted asylum requests, even if this proportion is computed with cohort-based statistics (Van der Erf, 2001). Another disadvantage of the use of cohort-based asylum statistics is that it is impossible to calculate recognition rates for recent cohorts without using prognosis.

7.3.6 Some conclusions

Many refugees fled from African, Asian and (to a lesser degree) Latin-American countries in the period 1960-2000. A considerable flow of European refugees, which continued during the 1990s, arose at the end of the 1980s. By far most refugees that flee from their own country seek protection in the neighbouring countries. Only a relatively small proportion seek asylum in other parts of the world (Europe, North America or Oceania). We may observe a regional component in intercontinental refugee flows as well. The distribution of the world's refugees between the continents is subject to change. Within Northern and Western Europe the distribution of asylum seekers over countries, which was also subject to change, was rather disproportionate. (West) Germany had by far the biggest inflow of asylum seekers in the 1980s and 1990s. Switzerland, Sweden, Germany and Austria were the leading countries in the 1980s and 1990s if we rank them according to the ratio of asylum applications to total population. These countries are among the most prosperous countries in Europe, an indication that economic factors in a country (i.e. GDP per capita or opportunities on the labour market) have a positive effect on the number of asylum seekers who choose a particular country as their destination. There is a lag between lodging an asylum application and the refugee status being granted. This lag varies between receiving countries and nationalities of asylum seekers and over time. Therefore, the focus in the analytical part of this study is on asylum applications, not on the number of asylum recognitions.

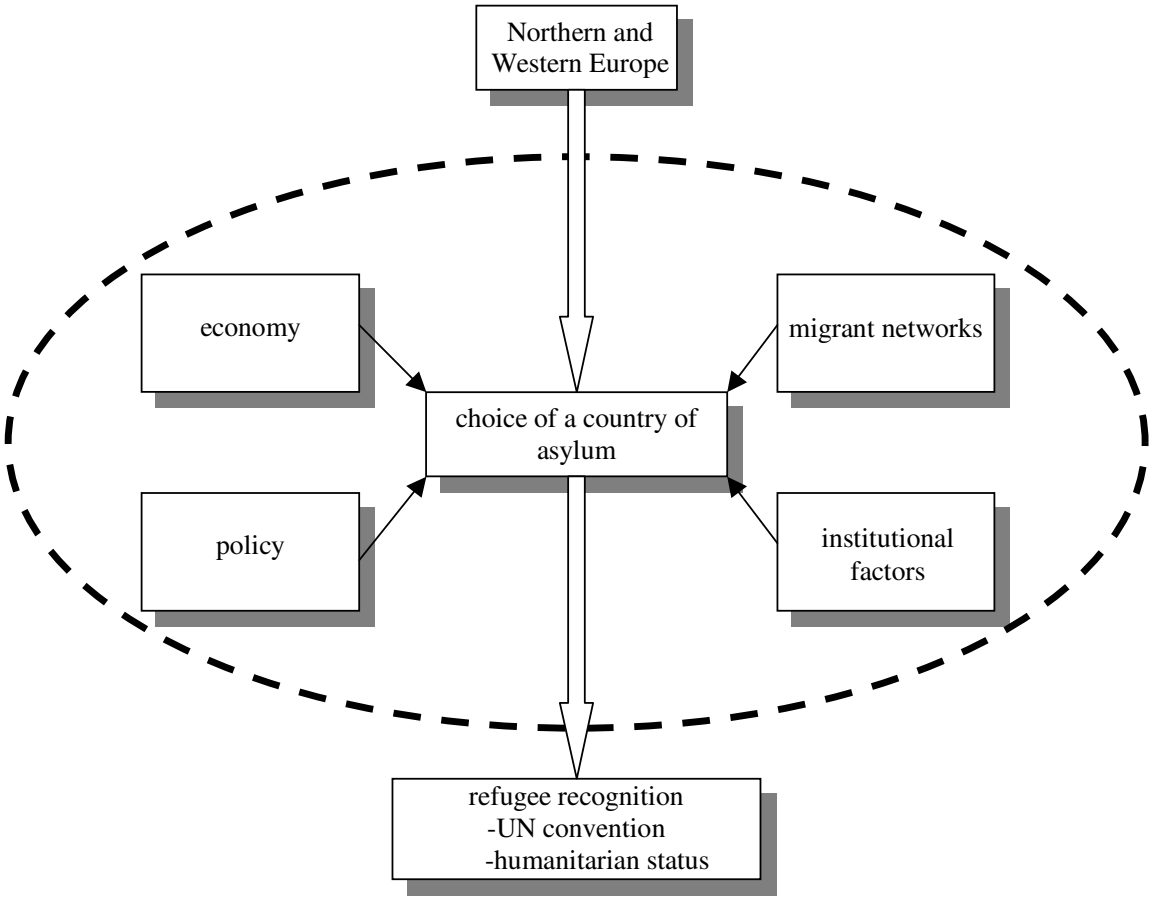
7.4 Explanatory models

In this section I present models to explain the distribution of asylum applications over Northern and Western European countries. In particular, I focus on the distribution of the total amount of asylum applications, asylum applications from (the former) Yugoslavia, and Turkish asylum applications.

7.4.1 Determinants of the choice of a country of asylum

Figure 7.5 can be seen as a close-up of figure 7.1, which zooms in on the lowest three rectangles, from 'Northern and Western Europe' to 'refugee recognition'. Figure 7.5 reflects a systematic overview of the determinants that may have an impact on a potential applicant's choice of a certain European country of asylum. These determinants are divided into economic, network, legislative and institutional determinants.

Figure 7.5. Determinants of the choice of a country of asylum



Economic determinants (for instance GDP per capita and unemployment) may influence the choice of a country of asylum, because these determinants are fairly good predictors of income (GDP per capita) or the likelihood of a job (unemployment) once a refugee status is granted. Moreover, it is likely that countries with a high level of economic prosperity (i.e. high GDP per capita) offer asylum seekers better facilities during their asylum procedures. Economic determinants may also influence the choice of a country of asylum indirectly. Labour market developments in potential receiving countries can have an effect on the attitude towards asylum seekers. In times of large scale unemployment for instance, immigrants (i.e. refugees with a status) are often considered competitors on the labour market by the public opinion. In times of labour shortages on the other hand, immigrants are often seen as the solution to this problem. The attitude towards immigrants may have an impact on asylum policies, which in turn may affect the distribution of asylum seekers over European countries. GDP per capita and unemployment are the variables which have been used in the analyses to represent prosperity effects that might impact on the distribution of asylum seekers over the countries in Northern and Western Europe. GDP per capita is presumed to exert a positive effect and unemployment a negative effect on the share of a particular country in the total number of asylum seekers in Northern and Western Europe.

It is quite obvious that asylum policies have an effect on the share of a particular country in the total number of asylum applications submitted in Northern and Western Europe. Moreover, as we already saw in section 7.3.4, this share may be determined by immigration policies in surrounding countries as well. In order to take into account important policy measures in the country itself and in surrounding countries, some dummy variables have been used in the models.

The migrant stock has been used in the analyses to represent the influence of migrant networks and institutional factors. I presume that the migrant stock has a positive effect on the share of a particular country in the total number of asylum seekers in Northern and Western Europe.

As far as I know, no macro-level empirical research has been conducted into the determinants of the distribution of asylum seekers over countries. However, as said in chapter 4, Vogler and Rotte (2000) found significant positive effects of GNP per capita (receiving country / sending country) and the size of the migrant stock on total immigration and asylum migration from African and Asian countries to Germany. This might support my presumptions that GDP per capita and the migrant stock have a positive effect on the share of asylum seekers that a particular country attracts.

7.4.2 Data[71] and methodology

The dependent variable in the analyses in this study is the number of asylum applications (source: Eurostat (2001)[72]). I use multinomial logit models to explain the dispersion of asylum applications over Northern and Western European countries. A multinomial logit model, which is frequently applied in migration research, is expressed as follows:

$$\Pr ob(Y_t = i) = Y_{it}^* = \frac{\exp(X_{it}\beta)}{\Sigma_{k=1}^{K} \exp(X_{kt}\beta)}.$$

The probability that a migrant chooses country *i* in year *t* (the proportion of country *i* in the total inflow in year *t*) is a function of the independent variables X_{it} of country *i* in year *t*. By definition $\Sigma_i Y_{it}^* = 1$. I use country-specific dummies α_i that capture time invariant effects of country *i*. Furthermore, I presume that the distribution of the migrants (in this case asylum seekers) is proportional to population Q_i of country *i* if we ignore other features of country *i*. Therefore, the model can be written as

$$\Pr ob(Y_t = i) = Y_{it}^* = \frac{Q_i \exp(\alpha_i + X_{it}\beta)}{\Sigma_{k=1}^{K} Q_k \exp(\alpha_k + X_{kt}\beta)}.$$

A disadvantage of multinomial logit models is the fact that these models cannot take autocorrelation into account, although the presence of the country-specific constants makes it improbable that the model contains autocorrelation.

The independent variables that have been used in the analyses are: GDP per capita, unemployment, and the natural logarithm of the migrant stock per capita. *Table 7.4* reflects the operationalisation and source of GDP per capita, unemployment and the migrant stock per capita.

[71] German data apply to West Germany for the years 1985-1989.

[72] The data source for the number of Turkish asylum applications in Germany 1995, France 1996 and Switzerland 1994-1996 and for the number of Yugoslavian asylum applications in Germany 1995-1996, Sweden 1995-1996 and Switzerland 1994-1996 is OECD (1998). These data have been rounded to the nearest hundred. The data source for the number of Yugoslavian asylum applications in the Netherlands 1995-1996 is Statistics Netherlands (2001).

Table 7.4. Socio-economic variables

Variable	Operationalisation	Source
GDP per capita	1990 US$ converted at Geary Khamis PPPs	Groningen Growth and Development Centre (GGDC) (2001)
Unemployment	Total unemployment as percentage of the total labour force	Gärtner (2000)
Migrant stock per 1000 inhabitants	Foreign nationals from sending areas[i] per capita[ii]	Council of Europe (2000)

i Asia (incl. Turkey), Africa, Latin America, the former Soviet Union, the former Yugoslavia and Romania.

ii The number of Yugoslavian and Turkish nationals per capita is used in the corresponding analyses.

The numbers of foreign nationals from areas from which asylum seekers depart are available for the years 1981, 1991 and 1999. Interpolation using linear trends has provided complete data for the period 1985-1999[73].

As has already been mentioned, dummy variables have been used in the models to take important policy measures into account. These variables capture the effects of observed changes in the share of asylum applications as a result of asylum policies in the country, or in other relevant European countries. *Table 7.5* provides information about the description, the period of application and the source of these variables.

[73] The stock in Austria 1999 = (stock 1991 x total foreign population 1999) / total foreign population 1991. The Yugoslav stock in Belgium 1999 is the average of 1998 and 2000. For France the stock in 1982 and 1990 has been used; extrapolation from 1990. Only Russian Federation data are available for the stock of former USSR nationals in France. For Germany the stock in 1980 is used. No West German data are available. For the Irish Republic the stock in 1992 is used; extrapolation before 1992. The total foreign population minus the foreign EU stock and the US stock has been used for the Irish Republic as no other data are available. For the Netherlands extrapolation using the linear trend has been applied to estimate the Turkish stock after 1990 because of large-scale naturalisation. The extrapolated value for the Turkish stock in 1999 has been used to compute the total stock of foreign nationals. The data source for nationals of the former Yugoslavian and the former Soviet Union in Switzerland 1991 is Eurostat (2000). For the UK the stock in 1989 has been used; extrapolation before 1989. The data source for Romanian nationals in the UK is Eurostat (2000).

Table 7.5. Policy dummy variables

Variable	Description	Year	Source
Revision of the Aliens Act of 1983 in Denmark	Revision of the Aliens Act in October 1986 made it possible to refuse asylum seekers from 'safe countries'.	1987	ICMPD (1994), Jensen (1999), Pedersen (1999)
Refugees from Sri Lanka and Iran in Norway	Many Asian refugees arrived in 1987. This led to policy changes, which were implemented from 1988 on.	1987	ICMPD (1994)
Asyl- and Fremdengesetz in Austria	Austrian authorities significantly tightened asylum law and its enforcement in 1992.	1992	ICMPD (1994), Fassmann (1999)
Asylum system more efficient in Switzerland	Measures to make the system more efficient caused a drastic decrease in asylum applications in 1992.	1992	ICMPD (1994)
Refugees from former Yugoslavia in Sweden	Many Yugoslav refugees arrived in 1992. Sweden introduced visas for Yugoslav nationals in 1993.[i]	1992	OECD (1998)
Visas for Bosnians in Sweden, effect in Norway	Introduction of visas in Sweden 1993 led to an increase in Norway, which introduced visas in October 1993.	1993	OECD (1998)
Asylum compromise in Germany, effect in the Netherlands	The asylum compromise of May 1993 in Germany caused an increase in the number of asylum applications.	1994	UN (1998), Van Wissen and De Beer (2000)

i This does not apply to Croatian and Slovenian nationals.

In general the implementation of immigration policies in a country causes a structural shift towards a lower level of immigration in this particular country and possibly a shift towards a higher level of immigration in surrounding countries. However, the policy dummy variables which have been used here only affect one specific year. The reason for this is that asylum policies in Northern and Western Europe can be seen as negative policy competition to attract as few asylum seekers as possible. All Northern and Western European countries that received considerable numbers of asylum seekers introduced more restrictive asylum procedures in the first half of the 1990s. Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the UK introduced these more restrictive asylum procedures in 1993 or in the beginning of 1994 (ICMPD, 1994; OECD, 1998; Angenendt, 1999a, 1999b). Austria and Switzerland already tightened up their asylum legislation in 1992. Therefore, I expect that the policy dummy variables for Austria and Switzerland would have a negative impact on the share of asylum seekers that these countries attracted in 1992. The Netherlands, on the contrary, did not develop stricter asylum policies until 1994. Hence, the analyses will provide a positive sign for the policy dummy variable for the Netherlands in 1994 in all likelihood.

Thus, this policy variable is actually not a reflection of policies in the Netherlands, but of policies in the nearby countries (especially Germany) or a reflection of the lack of stricter asylum policies in the Netherlands in 1993. Similar to the distribution of asylum seekers over the entire Northern and Western Europe, the distribution of asylum seekers over the Nordic countries can, to some extent, be seen as a system of communicating vessels as well. Halfway the 1980s the number of Asian refugees who sought asylum in the Nordic countries started to increase. The Danish government reacted to this increase with a revision of the Aliens Act of 1983 in October 1986. Therefore, I expect that the dummy variable 'Revision of the Aliens Act of 1983' to have a negative sign. Subsequently, the number of refugees who lodged an asylum application in Norway increased considerably in 1987. A likely cause of this increase is the policy measure in Denmark. Subsequently, Norway took policy measures which have materialised since 1988. Consequently, the dummy variable 'Refugees from Sri Lanka and Iran in 1987' will probably positively affect the share of asylum seekers who lodged an asylum application in Norway. A similar mechanism occurred in the beginning of the 1990s. Instead of Asian refugees, refugees from the former Yugoslavia were the asylum seekers that entered the Nordic countries on a large scale. Again Norway was the country that served as alternative destination after a neighbouring country (in this case Sweden) restricted the possibilities for asylum migration. Many Yugoslavian refugees arrived in Sweden in 1992. The Swedish reaction was the introduction of visas for Yugoslav nationals in 1993. This, in turn, led to an increase in the number of Yugoslavian asylum seekers in Norway, which introduced visas for Bosnians in October 1993. I expect the dummy variables 'Refugees from former Yugoslavia in Sweden' and 'Visas for Bosnians in Sweden, effect in Norway' to have positive effects on the share of asylum seekers who lodged an asylum application in Sweden in 1992 and Norway in 1993, respectively.

7.4.3 Total asylum applications

The first analyses conducted in this chapter are analyses on the distribution of the total number of asylum seekers over all Northern and Western European countries. *Table 7.6* presents the results of these analyses.

Table 7.6. Parameter estimates of multinomial logit models of the share of the total number of asylum applications in Northern and Western European countries, 1985-1999 (N x T = 180)

		Model A		Model B		Model C	
		Coefficients (t-values)					
Country specific constant	Austria	7.14**	(5.89)	4.30**	(3.44)	6.52**	(6.19)
	Belgium	7.87**	(6.78)	4.02**	(3.58)	7.09**	(7.64)
	Denmark	7.79**	(6.56)	3.63**	(3.21)	6.86**	(8.08)
	Finland	7.23**	(6.73)	2.48**	(2.69)	6.17**	(11.64)
	France	7.27**	(5.82)	2.92**	(2.46)	6.43**	(6.45)
	Germany	7.87**	(6.64)	4.40**	(3.70)	7.17**	(7.12)
	Irish Republic	7.74**	(7.56)	3.19**	(3.75)	6.80**	(11.33)
	The Netherlands	7.41**	(6.44)	4.02**	(3.49)	6.68**	(7.06)
	Norway	7.20**	(6.51)	3.40**	(3.15)	6.28**	(8.34)
	Sweden	7.97**	(7.26)	4.43**	(4.09)	7.18**	(8.52)
	Switzerland	7.90**	(6.19)	4.35**	(3.34)	7.01**	(6.99)
	UK	7.16**	(6.89)	3.16**	(3.33)	6.32**	(8.77)
Policy dummies	Fremdeng_Aut	-1.02**	(-2.39)	-1.04*	(-2.14)	-1.03**	(-2.43)
	Revision_Den	-0.39	(-0.35)	-0.11	(-0.09)	-0.34	(-0.30)
	AsylumCom_Net	1.06**	(3.60)	1.03**	(3.06)	1.05**	(3.56)
	RefAsia_Nor	1.03	(1.50)	1.56*	(2.00)	1.13	(1.64)
	VisaYug_Nor	0.67	(1.18)	0.63	(0.98)	0.68	(1.18)
	RefYug_Swe	0.77**	(3.14)	0.76**	(2.74)	0.79**	(3.21)
	AsylumSys_Swi	-1.02*	(-2.28)	-1.13*	(-2.21)	-1.05*	(-2.33)
Socio-economic variables	GDP per capita	-0.07	(-1.13)	0.17**	(2.91)	–	
	Unemployment	-0.17**	(-6.56)	–		-0.16**	(-7.21)
	Ln(migrant stock)	0.41	(1.39)	0.01	(0.04)	0.28	(1.02)
	Deviance	475348		617869		479543	
	Pseudo R^2	0.83		0.78		0.83	

* significant $p < 0.05$ (one-sided test)
** significant $p < 0.01$ (one-sided test)

Unemployment has a negative significant effect on the share of the total number of asylum seekers in the model with both GDP per capita and unemployment (model A). However, the effect of GDP per capita is, contrary to expectation, negative as well, but insignificant. The relatively high correlation between GDP per capita and unemployment is probably the cause, because model B with only GDP per capita reveals a significant positive effect. The pseudo R^2 is larger in model C with only unemployment than in model B. So, these multinomial models clearly demonstrate that unemployment has a larger impact on asylum migration than GDP. A possible explanation for this finding is that asylum seekers are often seen as competitors at the bottom of the labour market. As argued in section 6.2.3, an increase in unemployment often has a disproportionately large influence on the availability of jobs at the bottom of the labour market. On the other hand, a change in GDP per capita

generally occurs more evenly in all segments of the labour market. Therefore, an increase in unemployment causes larger public resistance to asylum than a decrease in GDP. This resistance can be seen as a determinant of the pressure on authorities to impose (migration) policy measures. Here, restrictions in the admittance policy are the direct causes of changes in the distribution of asylum seekers over the European countries. It is also possible that economic determinants have a direct impact on the choice of a particular country. This probably holds more for GDP per capita (indicator of facilities for asylum seekers) than for unemployment (indicator of the probability of obtaining a job). Nevertheless, the possibility of a paid job during the admittance procedure may attract asylum seekers as well.

The three models reveal positive effects of the migrant stock per capita. However, all effects are not significant.

All policy variables have the sign as expected. Despite some insignificant coefficients, we may state that policy measures have a considerable impact on the distribution of asylum seekers over Northern and Western European countries.

The country-specific dummies are very significant. This means that another underlying mechanism, which is not captured by the variables in the model, has a considerable impact on the distribution of asylum seekers in Northern and Western Europe. The country-specific dummies for Sweden, Switzerland and Germany, which have a reputation of being hospitable and tolerant towards refugees, are larger than average.

7.4.4 Asylum applications from (the former) Yugoslavia

In this section analyses have been conducted to explain the distribution of asylum seekers from (the former) Yugoslavia over the most important receiving countries in Northern and Western Europe. Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK were the most important receiving countries for Yugoslav asylum seekers in absolute terms in the period 1985-1999[74]. *Table 7.7* presents the results of three multinomial logit models.

[74] Actually, Austria belongs to the five most important receiving countries. However, Austria has been kept out of the analyses because of poor data availability in the NewCronos database after 1994.

Table 7.7. Parameter estimates of multinomial logit models of the share of Yugoslav asylum seekers in the five most important receiving countries, 1985-1999 (N x T = 75)

		Model A		Model B		Model C	
		Coefficients (t-values)					
Country-specific constant	Germany	-38.31**	(-4.59)	-44.00**	(-6.20)	-26.46**	(-5.59)
	The Netherlands	-32.61**	(-4.84)	-37.22**	(-6.51)	-22.57**	(-6.61)
	Sweden	-33.24**	(-4.61)	-38.18**	(-6.25)	-22.63**	(-5.97)
	Switzerland	-36.83**	(-4.42)	-42.34**	(-5.91)	-24.54**	(-5.67)
	UK	-34.69**	(-5.03)	-39.45**	(-6.78)	-24.53**	(-6.82)
Policy dummies	AsylumCom_Net	1.28**	(2.95)	1.26**	(2.90)	1.32**	(2.99)
	RefYug_Swe	1.11**	(4.42)	1.10**	(4.37)	1.11**	(4.32)
	AsylumSys_Swi	-1.35**	(-2.47)	-1.37**	(-2.49)	-1.28*	(-2.29)
Socio-economic variables	GDP per capita (x 10^{-4})	3.17*	(1.76)	4.28**	(2.72)	–	
	Unemployment	-0.07	(-1.21)	–		-0.12**	(-2.44)
	Ln(migrant stock)	1.68**	(3.81)	1.94**	(4.86)	1.20**	(3.55)
	Deviance	82228		84624		87463	
	Pseudo R^2	0.91		0.91		0.91	

* significant $p < 0.05$ (one-sided test)
** significant $p < 0.01$ (one-sided test)

All coefficients of the socio-economic variables in the three models have the expected sign and are, except for one coefficient in one model, significant. The only insignificant variable is unemployment in the model with both GDP per capita and unemployment (model A). The high correlation between GDP per capita and unemployment (-0.84) may be the cause of this insignificance, because model C with only unemployment reveals a significant coefficient. All policy dummies are also significant and have the expected sign. Therefore, we may conclude that asylum policies have a large impact on the dispersion of Yugoslavian asylum seekers. This is not very surprising as asylum policies in the 1990s were often a reaction to the large inflow of asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia. Germany has a long history of receiving Yugoslav (labour) migrants. Yugoslav migrant networks and institutions have been formed in Germany since 1968 (the year in which a labour agreement between Germany and Yugoslavia was concluded (Bretz, 1996)). In addition, Germany had a lenient asylum legislation vis-à-vis other states until 1993. Therefore, it is remarkable that the country-specific dummy for Germany is smaller than for the other countries. This may be seen as a support for our assumption that the migrant stock per capita, which has a significant positive effect in all models in this section, captures a large part of the effects of migrant networks, institutional factors and historical linkages between countries.

The overwhelming majority of the refugees from (the former) Yugoslavia arrived in Northern and Western Europe in the 1990s, although the number of refugees from Yugoslavia already started to increase in the second half of the 1980s. Therefore, I also estimated

parameters for the 1990s only. In contrast with the analyses for the period 1985-1999, unemployment appeared to have a more important impact on the dispersion of asylum seekers from the former Yugoslavia than GDP per capita. This result of these analyses is in line with the result of the analyses of total asylum flows. The impact of migrant policies and the stock of Yugoslavs did not change much after the analyses were restricted to the 1990s.

7.4.5 Turkish asylum applications

In this section analyses have been carried out to explain the dispersion of Turkish asylum seekers over the most important receiving countries in Northern and Western Europe. France, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK were the five most important receiving countries for Turkish asylum seekers in absolute terms in the period 1985-1999[74]. The results of three multinomial logit models are presented in *Table 7.8*.

Table 7.8. Parameter estimates of multinomial logit models of the share of Turkish asylum seekers in the five most important receiving countries, 1985-1999 (N x T = 75)

		Model A		Model B		Model C	
		Coefficients (t-values)					
Country-specific constant	France	-10.67	(-1.12)	-22.50**	(-2.59)	-8.03	(-0.90)
	Germany	-11.64	(-1.06)	-24.30*	(-2.35)	-7.56	(-0.75)
	The Netherlands	-12.03	(-1.29)	-23.02**	(-2.63)	-9.12	(-1.06)
	Switzerland	-8.99	(-1.11)	-18.35**	(-2.40)	-7.58	(-1.00)
	UK	-11.34	(-1.48)	-20.90**	(-2.99)	-9.64	(-1.35)
Policy dummies	AsylumCom_Net	-0.18	(-0.12)	-0.06	(-0.04)	-0.27	(-0.18)
	AsylumSys_Swi	-0.78	(-0.89)	-0.95	(-1.05)	-0.87	(-0.97)
Socio-economic variables	GDP per capita (x 10^{-4})	-2.40*	(-1.79)	-2.03	(-1.47)	–	
	Unemployment	-0.20*	(-2.23)	–		-0.18*	(-1.97)
	Ln(migrant stock)	0.57	(0.70)	1.32	(1.65)	-0.00	(-0.01)
	Deviance	64507		70675		68609	
	Pseudo R^2	0.83		0.81		0.82	

* significant $p < 0.05$ (one-sided test)
** significant $p < 0.01$ (one-sided test)

It is clear that the multinomial models are not able to explain the distribution of Turkish asylum seekers as well as that of the total amount of asylum seekers and that of Yugoslavian asylum seekers. The only socio-economic variable which is significant and has the expected sign is unemployment. GDP per capita even has a significant effect which contradicts with the presumption made in section 7.4.1 in the model with both GDP per capita and unemployment, i.e. model A. The sign of GDP per capita is also negative in the model with no unemployment (model B). However, the effect is not significant in this model.

The migrant stock has the expected sign in all models. However, the three coefficients are not significant. This insignificance may be explained by the ethnic composition of Turkish asylum seekers in the period 1985-1999. The PKK (*Partiya Karkarên Kurdistan*) started a guerrilla war in Southeastern Turkey in 1984 (Faist, 2000). More than two million Kurds became displaced persons in the period 1984-1995. Most of the Kurds who fled became internally displaced. Nevertheless, the proportion of Kurds among (asylum) emigrants from Turkey has become considerably higher since 1984 in comparison with the period before 1984 (Sirkeci, 2001). The Kurdish migrant stock may be an important determinant of the dispersion of Turkish asylum seekers in Northern and Western Europe in the period 1985-1999. Data on the Kurdish migrant stock are unfortunately not available.

The two policy dummies that are used in the analyses are not significant in all the three models. The policy dummy 'Asylum compromise in Germany, effect in the Netherlands' is negative which is contrary to expectation.

7.5 Conclusions and discussion

The aim of this chapter was to estimate determinants of the distribution of asylum seekers in Northern and Western Europe. The determinants that were estimated are GDP per capita, unemployment and the migrant stock per capita. Country-specific information was included to control for policy interventions. The analyses consisted of explanatory modelling of the distribution of the total number of asylum applications, Turkish asylum applications and asylum applications from (the former) Yugoslavia. Although not all effects are significant, we may state that GDP per capita and the migrant stock per capita have a positive impact and unemployment a negative impact on the share of the asylum seekers who applied for asylum in Northern and Western Europe that a particular country attracts per capita. The introduction of chapter 6 I stated that migration types which are sensitive to immigration policies are highly affected by unemployment in the receiving country. The results of the analyses in this chapter reveal that unemployment has a large impact on the distribution of asylum seekers. This is in line with the aforementioned statement, as asylum migration is a migration type which is sensitive to immigration policies.

All policy variables in the analyses of Yugoslav asylum applications are significant whereas these variables have almost no impact on the distribution of Turkish asylum applications. Hence, the conclusion that asylum policies in the 1990s were directed at Yugoslav asylum seekers in particular.

We have to be aware of three rather confounding data issues when conducting research into asylum applications. First, pre-selection may be a serious problem. Some countries may have a stricter admittance policy than others. Second, we have to deal with the problem of double counts in the case of lodging an appeal. Finally, some countries only

register the main applicant and ignore their children. These confounding data issues may affect the results of our analyses.

It remains to be seen to what extent research into determinants of the distribution of asylum seekers in Northern and Western Europe covers comprehensively the impact of these determinants on asylum migration. It is not inconceivable that determinants in European countries also have an impact on the number of asylum seekers who prefer Europe above other receiving areas (i.e. surrounding countries, North America or Oceania). We may call the latter phenomenon the generation of asylum seekers, while the changing distribution of asylum seekers over European countries may be called the substitution of asylum seekers. Van Wissen and Jennissen (2004) developed a method for inferring substitution and generation from the total number of asylum applications.

In this chapter only the distribution of asylum seekers over the Northern and Western European countries was considered. Generation effects were ignored. Can the results of this chapter nevertheless be used for projections? To answer this question some assumptions about the future total amount of asylum seekers have to be made. The number of Asian and African asylum seekers was fairly stable in the 1990s: a yearly average of 176,000 Asians and Africans, which ranged from 133,000 in 1994 to 211,000 in 1991, applied for asylum in Northern and Western Europe (Eurostat, 2001). The number of European asylum seekers was less stable: it peaked in the beginning of the 1990s, then decreased until 1997, hereafter we saw an increase again (see also figure 7.2). However, we may assume that this number will decrease to a low stable level as the turmoil in the Balkans has subsided. The only uncertain factors in the number of European asylum seekers are the political situation in Turkey (although we may see some cautious improvement here as well) and the unrest in some autonomous areas of the Russian Federation. All things considered, it is not very unrealistic to assume that a fairly constant number of about 200,000 asylum seekers will annually apply for asylum in Northern and Western Europe. This implies that the results of this chapter can be used to forecast the number of asylum applications in each of the Northern and Western European countries with assumptions about future economic development in the individual countries.